

Indiana House of Representatives

News and Information

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PIERCE SEEKS REVERSAL OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY THAT HARMS DRIVERS

INDIANAPOLIS – State Rep. Matt Pierce (D-Bloomington) is asking fellow legislators to help him reverse a Daniels Administration decision that ends the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) policy of notifying drivers when their licenses are about to expire.

In a letter to State Sen. Brent Steele (R-Bedford), who chairs the Interim Study Committee on Motor Vehicle Issues, Pierce asked the study group to consider recommending that the BMV resume its program of mailing notices to drivers advising them that their licenses have to be renewed.

"The Kernan Administration implemented this notification process because it recognized that it was unrealistic for people to keep a mental note in their heads that they must renew their licenses before a date several years into the future," Pierce said.

"Upon taking office, the governor and BMV Commissioner Joel Silverman terminated the notices," he continued. "Ironically, they described this reduction in service as a positive efficiency step in the governor's performance report issued recently. In that report, notifying drivers that their licenses are about to expire is described as an 'unnecessary process.'"

Before notice renewals were sent, Pierce talked to numerous people who were embarrassed to discover they were driving without a valid license, often for long periods of time.

"Needless to say, this has caused a great inconvenience for them," Pierce said. "Without renewal notices, people are discovering that their licenses are expired after they have been pulled over by a police officer or when trying to board an airplane. In the future, they may find out only when they go to the polls to vote on an Election Day, since a photo ID is now required to cast a ballot."

Pierce noted that renewal notices are more important than ever, since the Indiana General Assembly passed legislation extending the length of time that a license is valid. Without a renewal notice, more people than ever will forget to renew and be inadvertently driving with expired licenses.

"Here is yet another instance where this administration has made serving the public a low priority," Pierce said. "Not sending out renewal notices may save the government some money, but it will cost motorists their own time and money when they are ticketed for driving without a valid license or unable to board an airplane at the last minute. If the study committee does not include reinstatement of this service in its recommendation, I will offer my own legislation during the 2006 session."

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